GRAND LODGE

OF

PENNSYLVANIA.

In Memoriam.

Past Grand Master

SAMUEL H. PERKINS.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

R. W. GRAND LODGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

AT A

QUARTERLY COMMUNICATION,

HELD AT THE

Masonic Temple, Broad Street, Philadelphia,

June 3d, A. D. 1874, A. L. 5874,

IN REFERENCE TO THE DEATH OF P. G. M. BROTHER

SAMUEL H. PERKINS.

PHILADELPHIA:

A. C. Bryson & Co., Steam-Power Printers, 607 Chestnut St.

1874.

Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

AT the Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, held on Wednesday, June 3d, A. D., 1874, A. L., 5874, the following address, commemorative of Past Grand Master Brother SAMUEL H. PERKINS, was made by Past Grand Master Brother JAMES PAGE, and, with the resolutions attached thereto, was unanimously approved and adopted by the Grand Lodge.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER:

"When the breath of man goeth forth he shall turn again to his earth, and then all his thoughts perish."

WE are constantly reminded, by events happening around and about us daily and hourly, of the solemn truth so beautifully, yet so sadly, expressed by the inspired Psalmist whose words I quote. Here, in this Grand Lodge, we now seldom meet in our Quarterly Communications, that we are not called upon to notice and mourn the loss of a Brother who has held a high

position in the Order; and there, by the force of his talents, and his faithful discharge of extensive and responsible duties, given it increased strength, added to its fame, and enlarged its sphere of usefulness.

Such a Brother has just been called away in the person of the late Right Worshipful Past Grand Master Brother Samuel H. Perkins, Esquire, who was, when alive, with a single exception, the senior of our living Past Grand Masters.

He died calmly and quietly at his residence in this city, on the evening of the 22d of May last, in the 78th year of his age, after a long, active, industrious, and useful life, with an unblemished character and stainless reputation,—the good citizen, the honest man, and the sincere Christian,—and his remains were consigned to the tomb in Laurel Hill Cemetery, with the usual Masonic ceremonies, on the 26th of that month.

Perhaps among the many distinguished Masons who have occupied the Chair you now so worthily fill, no one of them can be said to have presided in it with more zeal, a larger amount of practical Masonic knowledge, a more faithful adhesion to the obligations of the craft, or a greater desire for its welfare and prosperity.

On his retirement, in 1840, when he declined a re-election to the Chair, he did not cease to take an active interest in the affairs of the Grand Lodge, nor in those of the Subordinate Lodge to which he was attached,

(as their several records attest,) but continued, whenever and wherever he could, to be of service to them; and at their meetings, and in their halls, he was generally present, and his voice often heard, and his experience freely given, for their instruction and benefit. His light did not decline when he was descending in the West, but up to the last its rays brightened the sky of his Masonic life, and shed their beams of encouragement and promise upon the Fraternity at large.

Right Worshipful Grand Master,—I offer the following sketch of the civil life of our deceased Past Grand Master, his Masonic record, and the subjoined resolutions, as a tribute of respect for the departed, that they may be enrolled upon the archives of the Grand Lodge, and the memory of a Brother "which is precious" shall not be lost:

The late Past Grand Master, Brother SAMUEL H. PERKINS, was born at Windham, Connecticut, on the 17th February, 1797. His father, SAMUEL PERKINS, was a distinguished lawyer in the eastern part of that state, and the author of a History of the War of 1812, and other works.

Brother PERKINS entered the Freshman Class of Yale College in 1813, and graduated with honor in 1817. The late Bishop DELANCEY, of the diocese of

Western New York; Judge JOEL JONES, formerly Mayor of Philadelphia; Prof. LYMAN COLEMAN, D.D., of Lafayette College, Easton, Penn'a, and the Hon. RUFUS P. SPALDING, were among his classmates. After graduating, he spent a year in teaching in a private family in North Carolina. Thence he came to Philadelphia, and studied law in the office of the late Hon. and Rt. W. P. G. M. Brother JOSIAH RANDALL, and was admitted to the bar December 13th, 1820.

He took an active part in politics, early identifying himself with the Democratic party, and receiving at its hands the nomination for Mayor of the city, and was for many years an earnest participant in movements having for their object the support of the Government in the late civil war, and the maintenance of the unity of the country.

At the organization of Girard College, in 1847, he was elected one of the Directors, and from 1852 to 1861, when he retired, was President of the Board.

Brother PERKINS took an active part in various religious and benevolent associations. From 1859, till his resignation, in 1872, he was President of the Union Benevolent Association, and of the Philadelphia Tract and Mission Society from September 27, 1846, till he resigned, in 1872. In 1851, he was elected a Vice-President of the Philadelphia Colonization Society, and held that office until his decease; and since 1843 he

has been a corporate member of "The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions." In 1846 he was elected and ordained an elder in the First Presbyterian Church in this city, an office which he held to the end of his life—a period of twenty-eight years.

In his professional career as a member of the Philadelphia bar, Brother PERKINS occupied a very prominent and popular position. Without being brilliant, he was nevertheless an earnest, impressive, and successful advocate, alike faithful to his clients and the court. His practice was large and remunerative. His application and industry were untiring.

He was as remarkable for his care in the preparation of his cases, as for his skill in the manner of trying them; and it has been truly said of him "that he brought to his profession sterling principles, founded on religious education, and was at no time without high credit for professional excellence—an excellence which really includes the soundest morals upon the purest motives. In taking the place of his client, he was careful to be only the representative of the right—to eliminate wrong from the case, and often make the suitor satisfied that he would rather fail for want of merit than triumph by the enforcement of wrong." The same writer adds, "that while Mr. PERKINS was eminently successful in cases that he undertook, he was too good a lawyer and too just a man to prosecute or

advise suit where failure would involve mortification and expense, while success would be of little moral or pecuniary advantage."

The Masonic Record of our deceased Past Grand Master dates from the 27th of November, 1820, when he was initiated in Columbia Lodge, No. 91. He was Crafted in that Lodge on the 25th December in the same year, and Raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on the 22d January, 1821. He became its Junior Warden in December, 1821, Senior Warden in December, 1822, and Worshipful Master in December, 1823, continuing after that to be a Member and Past Master up to the time of his death, always active and useful, and ever evincing a deep interest in its welfare and prosperity. As its Treasurer, he served from December, 1837, to the end of his life—a period of nearly thirty-seven years—in this trust, as in the many others placed under his charge, showing the same care and exhibiting the same fidelity.

In this Grand Lodge our deceased Brother was called to the Junior Grand Warden's Station in December, 1835, and to be its Deputy Grand Master in December, 1836-37, and its Right Worshipful Grand Master in December, 1838-39, diligently attentive in these several stations to the high duties imposed upon him. In 1836, when Masonry became the object of persecution for political ends in this state, Brother PERKINS, then

Junior Grand Warden, was among the number of distinguished Masons summoned to Harrisburg, and there compelled to remain while the discussions were going on in the two Houses of Legislature as to what steps should be taken to compel them to answer as to Masonic matters. It is needless to say that he, with the rest of the Brethren subjected to this inquisitorial violence, remained firm in their allegiance, and were at last permitted to return to their homes without further interruption or annoyance.

When the Committee on Land Marks, one of the most important in the Grand Lodge, was first established, in 1854, Past Grand Master PERKINS was the second Brother named upon it; Brother BAYSE NEWCOMB, a veteran of the craft and a Past Grand Master, widely known to, and highly respected and esteemed by the Order here and elsewhere, being made its chairman.

As a further evidence of the trust and confidence of the Grand Lodge, Brother PERKINS was elected one of the Trustees of the celebrated Girard Bequest, and took an active part in its management; and when, in 1850, Past Grand Master Brother NEWCOMB withdrew as chairman, on account of age, Brother PERKINS was elected in his place, and then became the leading Trustee. In his position as member and as chairman of this important body he was of eminent service to the

great Charity. Its funds had been increased from $20,000, the original bequest of Brother GIRARD, to $37,072.62, in 1850, and from that time until the demise of Brother PERKINS, the principal had, under his advice and guidance, grown to $57,616.34, and the annual relief distributed, which in the beginning was $1800, reached $3000, showing conclusively the successful management of the Fund from its inception, and especially while under his immediate control.

The safety and prudence of its investments and the rapid increase in this wonderful fountain of benevolence, charity, and brotherly love attest the Masonic services of our deceased Past Grand Master, his spotless honor, and his unswerving faith.

Well would it be for the Order, and for all, if every trust, public and private, were managed with the same skill and fidelity, and the benevolent designs and intentions of the founders of them carried out in good faith and held sacred forever.

Not alone in Masonic trusts and honors did our deceased Past Grand Master stand pre-eminent. He was elected Grand Scribe of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in 1828; was Grand King in 1829-30; Grand High Priest in 1831-1833; and Grand Secretary in 1834-1837. He was also an Eminent Commander of St. John's Commandery, No. 4, K.T.,

and a Past Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of the State.

In June, 1834, he was elected Right Worthy Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania of the I. O. of O. F.; in November of the same year, Deputy Grand Master, and in the June following, Most Worthy Grand Master. In June, 1836, he was elected Representative to the Grand Lodge of the United States, and in May, 1837, Most Worthy Grand Sire, the highest office in that fraternity.

He had, too, the rare and extraordinary gratification of seeing his son, our Brother SAMUEL C. PERKINS Esquire, elected Grand High Priest of the Holy Royal Arch Chapter (an honor once held by himself,) and subsequently elected Right Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, ably filling the station his father had done so much to honor; of being present at the dedication of this magnificent edifice, with solemn and imposing Masonic rites and ceremonies, and of witnessing the close of the successful administration of the affairs of the Grand Lodge by that son; resulting in signal benefit to the craft at large, and making still stronger the foundation and walls of our Grand Temple, which rears its tall tower to the skies, to stand for centuries to come, as a Masonic Land Mark, in the City of Brotherly Love, and as a monument of the energy, harmony, and power of our noble Order.

Surely the career of our deceased P. G. M. was not an uneventful one, nor without the honors and reflections to make the night of his old age a calm, serene, and happy one.

"The last end
Of the good man is peace! How calm his exit;
Night winds fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary, worn out winds expire so soft."

Therefore—

Resolved, That this Grand Lodge learns of the death of its late R. W. P. G. M., Brother SAMUEL H. PERKINS, with sincere regret and profound sorrow, allayed by the fact that he has gone to his grave "full of years and full of honors." He is a loss not only to this Order, of which he was for so many years an honorable, useful, and efficient member, but to the community at large, in which his sphere of usefulness was widely extended and generally and profitably felt.

Resolved, That as his Masonic career was pure and unspotted, so his private life exhibited a rare combination of those virtues which constitute the true man and good citizen; his Christian sympathies finding their happiest exercise in all movements designed for individual relief, and for the promotion of the common welfare.

Resolved, That although "the place which has known our brother shall know him no more," yet "his name shall not be lost," for we will write it in our hearts; "it shall live in his virtues which shall live in us and in every brother," for "he was worthy" in the light of his Masonic spirit and in the faith of his Masonic heart.

Resolved, That the condolence of this Grand Lodge is tendered to his family and friends, who, while mourning their loss, can take comfort from the word of the Supreme Grand Master of the Universe: "And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth that the bow shall be seen in the cloud."

Resolved, That these proceedings be printed in pamphlet form, and copies thereof sent to the family of the deceased, to the R. W. P. G. M. Brother Samuel C. Perkins, to the several grand Lodges of the United States, and to each Subordinate Lodge of the Jurisdiction, and that the Gavel, Columns and Jewels of the Grand Lodge be draped in mourning for the space of six months.